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Parisian work, the piece certainly gives a feeling of solid comfort and splendor, probably more appropriate to its place and use. It is manifestly the spacious throne of some gold-laced and bewigged magistrate rather than the dainty shrine of a mid-eighteenth-century queen of beauty. It dates from a time before woman became the arbiter of taste and manners and the *lit de repos* assumed the elegance of the painted boudoir—an indispensable in the mise en

positive. The only way out of the dilemma, therefore, for the Department of Prints, is once in a while to arrange an exhibition of typical and more noteworthy prints selected from its accessions during some recent period, and to invite the public to come and see for itself. Such an exhibition has now been hung in the north print gallery, to be on view until the middle of January, and it is earnestly hoped that the portion of the public which is interested



CRESTING, DAY-BED, FRENCH, XVIII CENTURY

scène of eighteenth-century gallantry apostrophized by M. de Rougemont as

“Meuble discret, pierre d’attente
Tu fus nommé par la paresse
Débaptisé par le plaisir.”

M. R. R.

RECENT ACCESSIONS IN THE PRINT ROOM AND THE MASTER E. S. OF 1467

FROM time to time it is possible to mention in these pages a very few of the items which enter the Museum's print room, but more than that cannot be done in the BULLETIN unless its character were to be fundamentally changed. Mere lists are not to be read saving by the most hardened of collectors and even they balk before any list of prints which is not to supply them with the excitement of a sale, for nothing is more deadly dull than rows and rows of names and titles and numbers. Only statisticians pretend to cope with such things, and their pretenses, as all the world knows, are summed up in the well-known grammatical comparison in which they appear as the superlative of a rather common

in such things will find it convenient to journey to the Museum and take a look at it, because there is to be seen a group of prints many of which are of very great interest and comparatively few of which are readily to be seen elsewhere in New York.

Naturally there is little coherency of interest in the exhibition, the material of which it is composed coming from too many widely separated periods and countries and representing too many aspects of thought and manners, but just because of this there is probably something in it which will prove of interest to everyone, no matter how narrowly restricted his interests are, unless it be that they are lithographs or Italian Renaissance single sheet woodcuts, none of which is shown. Is he addicted to Italian Renaissance engraving, there is a peculiarly fine impression of Mantegna's great oblong Entombment, a print fully worthy of the great master and the great period that produced it. Should his interests lie north of the Alps, he will find unusually beautiful impressions of great plates by Israel van Meckenem and Schongauer, and an array of engravings by the Master E. S. The northern woodcut is also represented by a few fine examples, beginning with the

illustrations in such a book as the famous Ulm edition of Boccaccio's *Noble Ladies* of 1473 and coming down to work by some of our own contemporaries, including on the way especially worth-while things by such men as Dürer, Lucas of Leyden, Goltzius and, in the nineteenth century, three

nificent impression of Lautensack's large three sheet view of Nuremberg, which shows the town much as it must have appeared in Dürer's day. The *Presentation in the Temple* in the dark manner, one of Rembrandt's greatest masterpieces, is also there, as are the plates of *Nymphs* and



SAINT GEORGE
BY THE MASTER E. S.

volumes illustrated by Daumier. A little group of Italian books calls attention to itself by the presence, among other equally interesting examples, of such better-known items as the Venetian *Herodotus* of 1494 and the Florentine *Laudi* of Jacopone da Todi of 1490. The etchings shown begin chronologically with Jerome Hopfer's portrait of the Emperor Charles V, in which there can be clearly seen traces of the craft and workmanship of the armorers who first used acids to bite metal plates. Another, early but somewhat later, etching is a mag-

Satyr by Fragonard, perhaps the most charming painter-etchings of the eighteenth century. The last century is represented, among other fine examples, by Goya's *Blind Street Singer*, his largest and one of his rarest plates, by a bound set of the same master's *Disasters of War*, several fine Delacroixs, and Degas' *Self-portrait*. There are early aquatints and soft-ground etchings, and the mezzotint is represented by a fresh, crisp copy of Evelyn's *Sculptura*, one of the plates in which is the famous *Head of the Executioner* by Prince Rupert of the

Pfalz who, not content with being one of the most dashing cavalry leaders of his day and an admiral in the navy, found time to be one of the earliest and best of the mezzotinters.

The labels on the prints and books exhibited contain short comments intended to help the visitor to a better understanding of their particular excellences and interest.

Of all the accessions to the collection during the period of growth represented by this little exhibition, the most important, and it is one of the most important made during the life of the print room, is the group of engravings by the primitive German engraver known as the Master E. S. Had it not been for the political disturbances in the Austrian lands, the two famous collections in the Albertina and the Hausbibliothek in Vienna would probably not have been amalgamated, and it would never have happened that the duplicates in the two collections, thus made one, could have been acquired by purchase. This, however, has happened and the Museum was thus fortunate enough to be able to secure the largest group of engravings by E. S. that has changed ownership at one time in a hundred years. It was literally a unique opportunity—and those who follow affairs in the world of prints know how uncommon such a thing is. Thanks to it the Museum, if not as rich as the much older and more famous public collections of Europe in the work of this master, now has such a group of his prints as several years ago would have been thought impossible ever to acquire. Luckily they are spread throughout his career, so that not only some of his earliest pieces but some of the very last can now be seen in originals in New York.

Thoroughly to appreciate the importance of such an acquisition as this requires, perhaps, a little explanation, as the prints by E. S. are of such great rarity and come from such an early period in the history of engraving that even the greatest and most assiduous collectors only infrequently can possess examples from his hand. Even a set of facsimiles of his prints has yet to be published, although it is understood that such a publication is now under way in Berlin.

Prior to the time of Dürer, German engraving is conveniently to be classified in four groups, typified in their chronological order by the Master of the Playing Cards, the Master E. S., Schongauer, and Israel van Meckenem. So far as can be determined, the Master of the Playing Cards, who stopped work presumably about 1450, was the earliest of all German engravers. Aside from himself, his generation of engravers, like that of the Master E. S., was composed of a very few men whose work, however interesting for archaeological reasons, is of slight artistic importance. Possibly the most famous of them is the Master of the Berlin Passion, who upon a plate of which so far as known only one unique impression survives engraved the figures 1446, which thus is the earliest dated engraving of which there is any record. The Master of the Playing Cards himself engraved a portrait of Saint Bernardino of Siena, who was canonized in 1449. Like the Flagellation of 1446, it is known only in one impression, which however holds the proud position of being the earliest of all of the millions of engraved portraits. With one great exception the second generation of engravers much resembled the first in their primitive and crude artistry. This exception is the Master E. S., who was the second engraver to put a date upon a plate and the first to sign one with his initials. He was not only a man of decided individuality, standing far above the ruck of his few contemporaries and predecessors, but an artist of real distinction who, unlike any of them, was to make a mark in the artistic history of engraving. He was, moreover, not only fertile in ideas but a very hard and active worker, there being in existence impressions of 317 plates from his hand. How many have vanished no one can tell, for of these 317 the impressions from 95 are unique, while of his two sets of playing cards, which together must have contained about 100 cards, only 57 are known, leaving a balance of say 43 unaccounted for. Among the prints by Israel van Meckenem there are 38 which are recognizable as copies of lost originals by E. S. We can thus say that we know he must have made at least 400 prints, and probably many

more. His last prints bear the dates 1466 and 1467. The third generation of engravers produced two remarkable men, Schongauer and the artist known either as the Master of the Amsterdam Cabinet or the Master of the Housebook. The fourth group is typified by Israel van Meckenem, an artist of quite inferior capacity, though

details from E. S.'s large plate of the Emperor and the Sibyl, a fine impression from which is now in the Museum, was copied in that Virgin with the Snake which is one of the last prints made by the Master of the Playing Cards. Schongauer, though not a secondary man, did not hesitate on at least one occasion to look very hard at a print



SAINT JOHN THE BAPTIST IN THE DESERT
BY THE MASTER E. S.

gifted with a certain ability in social caricature, whose work in far the greater part consists of copies of prints by his more gifted predecessors and contemporaries, among them being no less than 183 after E. S., and a number after Dürer. It is largely through the copies made from one another by the secondary engravers of the fifteenth century that it is possible to place them in their respective time groups. Thus we know that E. S. was working before the Master of the Playing Cards died, because

by E. S. Israel, as we have seen, copied not only E. S., whose pupil he may have been, but at the other end of his life, the much younger Dürer. The Coronation of the Virgin by him, in the present exhibition, is a copy after Holbein the elder, and he actually retouched the original worn plate of E. S.'s playing card of the "Tier Dame," an impression of which is also now shown, and added his housemark to this its second state.

To come back to the Master E. S. Not

only was he the greatest artist of all the engravers working prior to 1470, but he was by far the most prolific, his at least 400 plates looming large in number when compared with Schongauer's 117 and Dürer's 101. Because of this and the way in which he was copied, he exerted an enormous influence over all engraving north of the Alps down to 1500 and even later, for copies of his prints were made as late as after 1600. Probably the most widely spread set of de-

first man to set line engraving upon that path which through the work of such burinists as Schongauer, Dürer, Goltzius, Nanteuil, Beauvarlet, Porporati, and Gailard has extended down to our own time. Luckily there is included in the present so miscellaneous exhibition a fine impression of Mantegna's *Entombment*, comparison of which with the prints by E. S. and Schongauer will show more clearly than many words the peculiar importance of this



THE LOVERS ON A GRASSY BANK
BY THE MASTER E. S.

signs from his hand were his engraved illustrations for the *Ars Moriendi*, which were many times copied in engraving and on wood, inter alia serving as the originals from which the famous block books were copied. The most notoriously copied of his prints, however, are probably those, of which three are now on exhibition, that served as models for the Florentine engravers of the Prophets and Sibyls.

The reasons that lay back of this great popularity were his, for his time, pre-eminent draughtsmanship, his skill in constructing a picture, and the charm and abundance of his ornamental detail. In addition he was the first great experimenter in technique, and may be regarded as the

particular aspect of E. S.'s work. Mantegna was a painter, and when he came to use the graver, for it must be remembered that he was one of the first engravers in north Italy, he came to it from drawing and painting. He therefore naturally used the tool of the engraver to make what may almost be called imitation drawings rather than engravings "that you would call" engravings, and in fact in many of the older collections his prints were classified as drawings. They are big and broad and slashing, with bold line work of such a kind as a man only does when he has been accustomed to draw with a free-moving point like that of brush or chalk or pen. Now, as compared with Mantegna, E. S. is tight and

cramped and his work all smells of the graving tool. The reason is that he was not a painter at all, and certainly a goldsmith, at least in his early training. The burin was the particular tool of the goldsmiths, who from time immemorial had used it in decorating and engraving patterns upon their fine metalwork. They were not draughtsmen as painters were but ornamentists or decorators of small surfaces, with completely different problems, among which was prominent the necessity or popular demand that the work be tidy, full of minute detail, and, in a word, what the Germans call "glaenzend." The man who works on a small surface that has to be held in the hand to be seen and examined, as the goldsmith does, rarely or never is called upon to think of "big" design, and draughtsmanship in the painter's sense of the word is almost never demanded of him. If these things are borne in mind it immediately is obvious why E. S. should have had such an enormous influence in the North and upon the subsequent history of engraving—for where the Italian engravers were painters or attached to painters' studios the early northern engravers came out of the goldsmiths' shops, as did even Dürer, and thus naturally followed the simpler path laid down for them by one of their own kind.

Who he was, his name, or his place of origin or work, are unknown to us, although it seems probable that he worked in northeastern Switzerland or in the southern Rhine country.

Among the prints by him now on exhibition especial attention may be called to the Emperor and the Sibyl (L. 192), one of the earliest of his works and one historically of extreme importance, the beautiful design for a paten (L. 149), reproduced on page 263 of this number of the BULLETIN, which is not impossibly the most copied of all fifteenth-century engravings, the early Visitation (L. 17), the Lovers (L. 211), Samson and Delilah (L. 6), Saint George and the Dragon (L. 145), and the Knight and Lady (L. 212)—as interesting and as charming a group of primitive engravings as one could well desire to see.

W. M. I., JR.

THE MUSEUM IN USE

THE continued growth in the educational work carried on both by the Museum and in the Museum is plainly indicated by the increasing demands made upon the Museum lecture hall and classrooms. Typical of this use is the record of a recent Saturday when there met by appointment in these rooms eleven groups as follows: three college extension classes, two from Columbia University and one from Rutgers College; three appointments for members, a lecture in the outline course in the history of painting, a study-hour, and a story-hour for children of members; a class from the Manhattan Evening Trade School; a meeting of the New York Classical Club; two lectures given under the auspices of the School Art League; and one of the Saturday afternoon lectures for the public in the Museum course.

The steadily increasing interest in the study-hours for practical workers conducted by Professor Grace Cornell has been again demonstrated by the attendance at the fall series. The group meeting on Sunday afternoons averaged over a hundred, thus outgrowing Class Room C. At the Friday morning series for salespeople, recently completed, employees from R. H. Macy & Co., Lord & Taylor, James McCreery & Co., Bonwit Teller & Co., and Best & Co. were in attendance. The next general series begins early in March, but four special series have been arranged in response to the request of R. H. Macy & Co. and Abraham & Straus of Brooklyn, to be given at the Museum for their executives, buyers, and assistant buyers. Other requests for special courses this year have been reluctantly denied because Miss Cornell's time is fully occupied.

A series of seven story-hours for crippled children has been arranged by the Museum after consultation with Dr. Adela J. Smith, Assistant Director of Physical Training in the public schools of the City. Some of these children are well enough to attend special schools, others must be taught at their homes. All have to be conveyed to the Museum in automobiles. A contribution of a comparatively small sum for